

Mindset? What Mindset?

According to several dictionaries a mindset is:

"mindset" {noun}

a set of beliefs or a way of thinking that determines one's behavior, outlook and mental attitude.

Mindset: a fixed frame of reference, the mind's orientation or perspective. The mental grid a person uses to filter data from their environment.

Mentality: a habitual or characteristic mental attitude that determines how you will interpret and respond to situations.

There are all kinds of 'mindsets' that we develop over the course of our lives and all of them are important in determining just how we act, react and move through our world during our daily lives. As always, there are degrees to any mindset and some requirements – personal, mental and physical.

For instance, at the root of a self-reliant mindset is a conscious effort of replacing an "I need help" attitude with an "I can do it myself" attitude. Therein lies the silver-lining of self-reliance; when you achieve even a modicum of it, you feel really good about yourself.

I found this fancy psychological study done on mindsets to determine what traits or attributes hinder or help a person with any particular mindset. What the long, wordy study said was that basically *all* mindsets are either of the *Fixed* or *Growth* type.

The more 'growth' mindsets you have, the more *adaptive* and *resilient* you are – the better capable you are to not only survive adverse situations, but thrive. If you want to know what your base mindset attributes are (growth or fixed) try the little test @ <http://mindsetonline.com/testyourmindset/step1.php>



While a Lifestyle is:

Lifestyle: A way of living of individuals, families (households), and societies, which they manifest in coping with their physical, psychological, social, and economic environments on a day-to-day basis. Lifestyle is expressed in both work and leisure behavior patterns and (on an individual basis) in activities, attitudes, interests, opinions, values, and allocation of income. It also reflects people's self image or self concept; the way they see themselves and believe they are seen by the others. Lifestyle is a composite of motivations, needs, and wants and is influenced by factors such as culture, family, reference groups, and social class. The analysis of consumer life styles (called psychographics) is an important factor in determining how consumers make their purchase decisions.

Noun: the habits, attitudes, tastes, moral standards, economic level, etc., that together constitute the mode of living of an individual or group.

Adjective: pertaining to or catering to a certain lifestyle: unhealthy lifestyle choices; lifestyle advertising; a luxury lifestyle hotel; suggestive of a fashionable or desirable lifestyle a lifestyle café

A mindset and a life style are similar in that the mindset is how we view or 'filter' what we see around us and how we react to it. While a life style is what we do to meet our fuzzy wuzzy side of wellness and how we want others to see us while doing it.

Over the years I have worked with seniors that needed to downsize because of health and or the economy. Just about all of them felt that they were somehow losing their status in society by downsizing. Now some of these people felt that anything under 3,000 sq ft was just right or small. Granted that might be true if there are 6 or more of you in a home, or a household member is claustrophobic, but the reality is that that is a huge home for the majority of US households of 4 or less and in most cases that much space is *not* being utilized.

Up until the late 1800's to early 1900's closets in homes were small as most people only had a few articles of clothing and rooms were much smaller or cozy. In the 1980's large master bedrooms with walk-in closets and master baths was all the rage. Remember the sales pitches or the marketing and advertizing; "Have your own master suite", "Relax in luxury in your own private spa-like bath" and the like? Yet just how often do these people utilize all the clothes in their closets or relax in their master bedrooms and baths? Yet they are paying for it with their mortgages, time to clean and maintain and money to heat and cool these underutilized rooms.

(To take a Home Usage Audit and Home Content Audit see: Can You Afford Your House Lifestyle? @ http://weebly-file/2/2/5/0/22509786/can_you_afford_your_house_lifestyle_new_site.pdf)

Then there is the old stand-by of “Look good, feel good”, which is great for depression riddled people but has absolutely no value to people who accept life as it really is. Reality lifestyles are people that know that how we feel and perceive ourselves to be, is rooted in our own minds and not our outward appearances.

That is not to say that the people living in reality are not happy and content with life, because I can assure you most of us are and then some. The real difference is how we perceive ourselves and civilization. We have become a society driven by stuff and convenience. We have been lead to believe that the more stuff, the flashier the stuff, the more expensive the stuff we surround ourselves with equates to success, wealth and beauty. The reality is that this is just stuff and success, wealth and beauty are not attributes that can be readily displayed. We can project the *illusion* of them, but display it to achieve it – NO. Studies around the globe have proven that people that are truly content and happy in life usually don’t have tons of stuff around them and that people who are striving to reach this state of mind do. The realist knows the difference and still strives to fulfill their dreams in the face of it – without any illusions.



What does all this have to do with preparedness?

In many ways being prepared, having the preparedness mindset, is a lifestyle change, however in a very real sense it is not. Instead it is merely an extension of frugality, positive thinking, readiness, faith and common sense used to control some of the many factors in our environment. This means that the changes to our lifestyles for preparedness are rather superficial and not bone deep. True you have to live it to have it; however it *does not* require much in outward changes to our lifestyles.

When thinking of preparedness or survival in a worst case scenario, most people focus on storing food, water, medicine, fire starters and other survival gear. We prepare ourselves in every way imaginable. ***But how many of us stop long enough to prepare ourselves mentally? To prepare our mindset to survive and thrive?***

Think about this: Throughout history, probably more than 99% of people who ever lived had to work from sunup to sundown just so they would be able to eat the next day. They had little time for fun and hobbies, yet alone worrying and fretting.

If the worst happens we, too, might have very little leisure time and of course things like television, cell phones, GPS and video games will be unavailable. If spending the majority of our time just trying to live sounds rough, remember that our ancestors did it. How? *Determination, a Can Do attitude and mindset.*

Stay calm, time yourself well
and just **shine**. You'll **do fine**,
safe in the knowledge that you've done
far more **preparation** than
ANYONE else!

Every single one of us is a descendant of people who had enough focus and determination to get through the worst of circumstances, otherwise we wouldn't be here. These qualities might be dormant in many of us, but they are there and have been since we were born. All we have to do is exercise and take advantage of them.

There really is nothing to be afraid of because we are already more capable than we can imagine. If we are prepared spiritually, economically, intellectually and physically; then when the time comes, we will be able to tap into our inner survivor and stay focused and strong - no matter what is thrown at us in a SHTF world.

This will be much easier for us, if we prepare ourselves ahead of time. And the sooner we start training our mind and body the better they will respond when the time comes.

Remember that 99.99% of the disasters we will encounter will NOT involve a widespread, government/world altering event. Instead they will take the form of lost jobs, accidents, medical issues, fire, crime, etc., followed by the usual severe weather and natural planetary issues.



There are those in age across the board who have chosen to insulate themselves against the possibility of a coming disaster; some won't even speak of the subject. Abusive language is often used against them by family members that have become impatient and frustrated. Well intentioned friends and others will try to strike up a meaningful conversation with them because these delicate individuals choose to ignore something imminent and dangerous that could cost them their lives.

We've all heard these rationalizations and excuses before:

- I can't afford to buy or stock up on emergency supplies.
- I don't know what I should do.
- I don't think anything bad will really happen, people are too inventive and ingenious.
- I don't have time.
- I'm too old to start or care
- Other people are preparing for me.
- My faith alone will see me through.
- I can't stand the thought.
- I can't do anything to prepare and am ready to die if this is it.
- Where I live is protected. I'm safe
- Its too much trouble
- That's what such-n-such entity is for. ('helper' entities, governments, etc.)
- That's just a scam or scare tactic



The expectation that the “government will take care of me/us in an emergency” is simply not true. Just take a look at recent history if you don't believe me. Fact is Emergency Preparedness has always been firstly an individual effort. No matter how advanced our civilization becomes, it can't compensate that preparedness starts with each individual.



So, what is to be done with someone that refuses to prepare? Very little really; unless there is a responsible caregiver whom understands and takes care of them. **Bottom Line: One cannot be forced to do something**, even if this attitude isn't really 'normal' and may vary well have some unpleasant consequences.



That said, here are some “human factors” that can cause us to *avoid* being prepared:

- **Denial:** Is a feeling that just because nothing like this has ever happened means it never will, or nothing awful can possibly change things, is something that all of us need to overcome. Things can change in an instant and the sooner our mind can accept it the better. The first reaction will probably be: "This can't be happening to me!" But an emergency, disaster, accident or crash can happen to anyone and it can result in a situation where your life is at risk.
- **Panic:** Once you get past denial, there is a strong chance you may panic. This is when judgment and reasoning deteriorate to the point where it can result in self-destructive behavior. Like the drowning victim that just about drowns their rescuer. It can happen to anyone, especially those that run around with rose colored glasses.
- **Hypoactivity**, defined as a depressed reaction; or hyperactivity, an intense but undirected liveliness. The depressed person will not look after himself or herself and will probably need to be told what to do. The hyperactive response can be more dangerous because the affected person may give a misleading impression of purposefulness and leadership.
- **Stereotypical behavior:** This is a form of denial in which victims fall back on learned behavior patterns, no matter how inappropriate they are. The Boss may decide to continue in that role, even though he/she has no idea of what to do. Sadly, the underling may also revert to that subordinate role, even though he/she may be better prepared mentally. Or we can just 'let' someone else take care of us even if that person doesn't know what they are doing any more than we do.
- **Anger:** Is almost a universal reaction, usually is rather irrational. Rescue workers frequently come under verbal and physical attack while performing their duties.
- **Psychological breakdown:** This could be the most desperate problem facing a person in the midst of a crisis and this stage is characterized by irritability, lack of interest, apprehension, psycho-motor retardation and confusion. Once this point is reached, the ultimate consequence may be death.
- **Complacency** - A product of boredom, distraction, lack of awareness, or failure to question old habits results in a belief that "*I've done this before successfully therefore there won't be a problem the next time!*" Not necessarily! Sometimes we are suckered into complacency by our past successes!
- **Risk perception** – A situation that is familiar, controllable, pleasant, predictable and avoidable is perceived to be of less risk. Consequently when an activity becomes routine the likelihood of an accident increases. Also keep in mind that to be able to deal with a dangerous situation you must first be able to *recognize a dangerous situation!*
- **Overconfidence** – An unrealistic belief in one's ability to cope with life threatening situations. Men are particularly prone to overestimating their ability to cope with a crisis. Sometimes brute strength isn't enough!
- **Goal setting** – The inability to adjust goals as situations change often leads to accidents. Remember – it is never wrong to turn back!
- **Impatience** – Patience is a virtue, impatience can be disastrous. Continuing on in the face of bad weather, rough terrain, darkness or other hazards in an effort to "*get-back-at-all-cost!*" can be fatal.
- **Commitments** – Do not allow previously made commitments to influence what you should do when you are in trouble. Do what is in your best interest and don't worry about what your spouse or anyone else is thinking or what your employer is going to think when you don't show up for work. Their concerns are no longer important. Keeping yourself safe is.
- **Peer pressure** - Don't concern yourself with what others may think. You can survive teasing, ridicule and the comments of others, but you may not survive the impact of the environment if you fail to protect yourself. Do what you have to to be alive to be teased!
- **Failing to test** – Nothing gets people in trouble quicker than accepting, at face value, the

advice of others or a particular 'report'. Test and research everything before your life's on the line. Knowledge is power and helps to

control fear and panic. Practice your survival skills and experiment with your equipment before you need to use them in a crisis.



Key points from the Pro's on Preparedness/Survival Mindsets:

In all my research on a Preparedness Mindset, a few things stood out as being the most important. Now granted these are those relatively intangible, fuzzy wuzzy things, and no matter how hard they are to describe and implement - they are vital to a healthy preparedness mindset!

- ❖ **A Positive Mental Attitude** – Can Do, Will Do rather than Can't or Won't
- ❖ **A Firm Grasp of Reality** – Fact oriented rather than conjecture or perception, allowing calm informed action vs panic-like uninformed reaction.

These two factors appeared in article after article, book after book, study after study. Since they were repeated so frequently this places them at the top of the Preparedness Mindset requirement list.



Attitude: We are ultimately the only ones responsible for how we feel and behave. We have the choice to be sure of ourselves, to think positive or to fret and fear, rant and rave. At any moment in our waking existence, we can choose what and how to think and feel about just about anything.

Start looking at how you think – positive or negative; glass half full or glass half empty; can do or can't do; optimistic or pessimistic and despondent. Each and every one of us ultimately has the ability to stop bad thoughts in their tracks and turn our mind elsewhere. Pay close attention to negative thoughts, emotional states and fear based decisions.

Preparation of the soul. There can be no hope or lasting future for people who have not made peace with the Creator. We all know that it is a good idea to be prepared for certain eventualities in this life. There of course are different levels of preparedness; from having a spare tire in your trunk in case you get a flat, all the way up to having a years' worth of food stored in case the economy crashes. Most people's preparedness will fall somewhere between these two examples, but very few people will not prepare for anything at all. Surrender: Let go of your fear of dying. This is the type of thinking John Leach calls: "resignation without giving up. It is survival by surrender."



Be firm in your faith. No matter what you believe, the afterlife is there no matter the state of our world. Decide what you can live with in a chaotic world. Otherwise decent people will do the unthinkable and you must decide *now*, not when the time comes, that you will survive and defend yourself. Your faith might be all you have when faced with disaster, illness, or whatever else this world can throw at you.



Be open minded so you are not set in your ways or on one specific method or technique to accomplish something. ie the power to adapt or improvise and try something new.

Perceive, believe: If there is any denial, it is counterbalanced by a solid belief in the clear evidence of their senses. In other words, survivors establish a survival mindset immediately. They see opportunity, even good, in their situation.

Train yourself to **do what doesn't come naturally** when needed. For instance, if you have never fished at least try it and see what it takes to gut and dress the fish for eating.

You will need to work on yourself by simulating some of the potential threats you might face, working thru decisions under duress, and finally being able to put aside your emotional feelings and focus carefully on the threat and how it affects your basic needs. A great way to test your resilience is with survival outings, self protection training, and working with others who have already worked out good decision planning on the various types of threats.

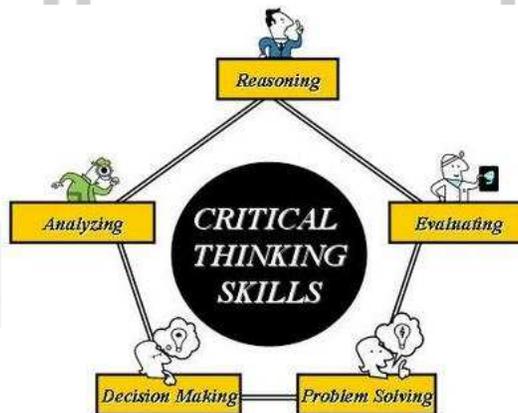
If the situation is dire, you must remember that you can survive an hour...one minute at a time. Focus on surviving with a grateful to be alive attitude. Do not get caught up in negative thinking about how long its been, or how are you going to make it through the night. Focus on the present time, one minute at a time.

Make sure that you do not get caught up in the future or past events, instead stay completely grounded in the present. Go back to the basic needs and distract yourself by improving your situation. Being grounded in the present opens up opportunities because your awareness is at work, which can provide you with information you were unaware of during the first leg of the disaster. If you immerse yourself in the "now" then your mental state will automatically release a lot of anxiety and fear that comes in waves during a crisis.



Be willing to act, otherwise no amount of preparation will save you.

Learn from mistakes



Learn to improvise: In some ways improvisation is the opposite of planning. It's about staying resilient, adapting to what others do, and trusting your instincts. We see this as neighbors help neighbors when disaster strikes.

Learn to think for yourself- We have been taught, from an early age, to accept what people tell you as truth, not to question authority and men are supposed to be soft and not stand up for themselves. Over the past 30-40 years, our school systems, the media even our government has been indoctrinating us with their version of the truth. I know I sound like I should put on my tinfoil hat now, but it is true. If you will take the time to analyze the information you receive on a daily basis, instead of just going along on autopilot, you would quickly see what I am talking about. Don't let anyone think for you (not even me). The facts will always make themselves clear to those who look for them.

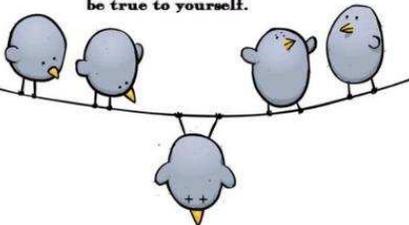
To find yourself
Think for yourself
:Socrates



Be honest about your knowledge, skills, capabilities and competencies. It is fundamental to your survival that your **expectations do not exceed the skills or resources** you have available. Elaborate and complex ideas or plans will be even harder to accomplish if you are in a survival situation. Don't make your survival any harder than necessary. Simple solutions are quite often the best and easiest to accomplish when faced with what may be limited resources or skills.

Be True to Yourself

open your eyes
to the beauty around you,
open your mind
to the wonders of life,
open your heart
to those who love you,
and always
be true to yourself.



Listen to your intuition- We were created with a sense of self preservation. If you start to go into an area, and something inside you is saying don't go, listen to it. If your wrong, your still alive, even if you feel silly. If your right, you have just saved yourself. Learn to trust your instincts and to rely upon your skills. These have the ability and the capacity to change your life from merely surviving to actually thriving in a survival scenario. Many people lose touch with their basic survival instincts when they become too comfortable and complacent in their daily lives. Staying connected to your basic instincts and being able to depend upon your skills and abilities when needed are important factors of the survival mindset.

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The decisions you make are important. Deciding you are going to survive or succeed is critical. You will never hit a target at which you are not aiming. So aim to succeed and then do what it takes to make it happen. The prepared person is **informed**, not turned to denial.

You have to want it badly.

Never give up: There is always one more thing you can do.

Make every effort possible to **avoid wishful thinking**. It's not very realistic. Wishful thinking may make you feel better about your situation but it won't help your chances for survival.

Negative thinking will only allow our emotions to take control of your thought processes and hinder your ability to deal with a crisis or a survival situation - maintain a "can do" attitude at all times.



Don't be a doomsayer and Stop focusing on all the scary stuff - instead focus on what you can do for yourself.

This doesn't mean you should be delusional. In fact, sometimes people who are overly positive don't last as long because they are repeatedly crushed by disappointment. So have the right, positive and problem-solver attitude is essential.

Don't assume that someone else is going to prevent something from happening or help you once it does happen. Take responsibility for yourself.

Avoid Complacency – So many people are still not paying attention and continue to feel "someone else" like the government will take care of them. We don't have a fairy godmother and utopia does not exist, so we must be alert to what is happening around us and prepare for the unexpected.



Denying that we are in trouble is a big mistake. I know how easy it is to try and push the bad news into a corner and try to forget about it. I am a human, I have done this many times myself but the one fact about doing this is that even though you brushed the trouble into a corner, the trouble is still there waiting. It doesn't just go away when you can't see it. The prepared person is informed, not turned to denial.

There's no strength in pretending the problem isn't there – or isn't solvable. Face it, Research it and Get it out. Talk with someone trusted about your concerns, wishes, desires and fears. Then brainstorm and face these things all head on.



Don't follow blindly. Gather info, evaluate and make your own choices.

“He who joyfully marches to music in rank and file has already earned my contempt. He has been given a large brain by mistake, since for him the spinal cord would surely suffice.”

Albert Einstein

Don't underestimate Mother Nature or how low humans can get! The weather can change dramatically, for the worse, in a very short time. Ordinary people will do extra-ordinary things in times of crisis – even deadly things!

Bad things happen to good people, get over it and stop sitting on the pity pot; then put a plan in place to protect you and yours.

Accept that life is going to be tough, that bad things do happen, even to good people. Envision what a long-term urban survival situation might be like in your area. There could be sick and hungry people, rioters and looters, pain and suffering, along with criminals. Your life could be turned upside down and you will have to face that. However, there's a difference between *accepting* this and *dwelling* on it, you don't want to be a doomsayer.

Accept your own mortality. Many people let the fear of dying or the fear of their loved ones dying, take over their mental state. Fear kills quicker than anything else because from it comes impulsive, poor decision making. So, sit down alone and make peace with your own death, knowing that we all die sometime. Once you realize and accept this fact, then you can put aside the fear of death during a disaster, focus only on the basic needs, which in turn leads to living another day.

Know how your family members and you react to stress. It is important to recognize the response to stress in your group, know how to mitigate and not over-react to their responses, and finally provide your group with a plan and some details about the plan so they feel more confident in your decision making process.

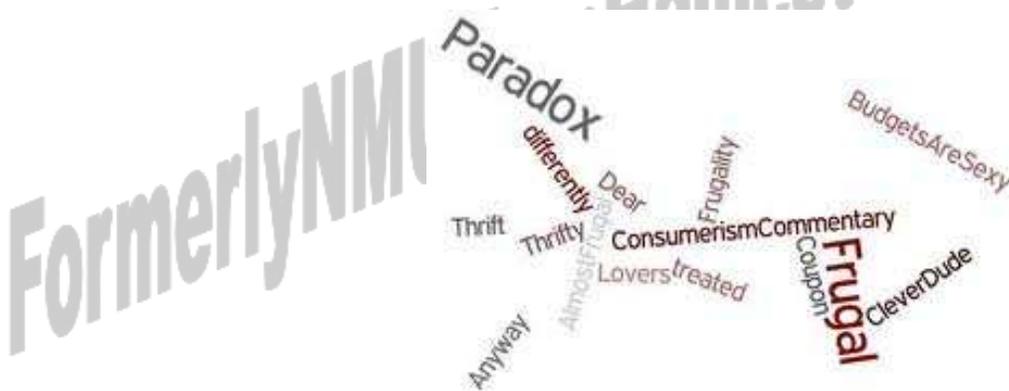
Understand you can't do it all yourself- If you take on the idea that you are going to be a lone survivor hiding out in the woods, you are going to have a long hard way to go. No one person can learn all the skills needed to handle any given situation. However, right around you is a community of people who, if you can stick together, can handle most situations. They may not agree with your view of things, but they have skills related to their every day existence. Get to know them. Work with them. Learn to barter with them. The closer you get to someone, the more you will be concerned for them, and they for you.

Accept that preparedness is not a onetime thing. It will take time, effort, energy and monies. Preparedness is more than stockpiling. It is making sure you have the knowledge and skills to utilize your stockpiled supplies and that they are nutritional, viable and in good working order.

Accept each member's differences and strengths and develop a plan to maximize all strengths. **Successful preparedness is a team effort.**

Awareness: Actively seeing and assessing information is crucial when it comes time to actually put a plan into action. Being aware of your situation is a must. And remember, you MUST have a plan. Be aware of your surroundings. Notice the sun's position at different parts of the day. Notice the cars/trucks you see on a regular basis in and around you no matter where you are. Reaching good levels of awareness is even more important than tactical training, you always having an option, and avoiding trouble is always the best course of action. Heck, even if it's not an option in a particular case, awareness may as well translate in you having the upper hand and that may make all the difference regarding the outcome. Learn to recognize every life-threatening situation and act accordingly to overcome it.

Reaching good levels of **awareness** is even more important than tactical training, you always having an option and avoiding trouble is always the best course of action.



Don't assume that 'it' will never happen to you. Be alert, stop and think "Am I parked in a safe place", "Is this door secure", "Do I have enough cash to last a week or two without ATM's and banks".

Avoid areas you don't know- Dark streets, parks, parking lots and alleys are places you should avoid, especially when you don't know the area. Remember all the scary movies that involve dark areas where the bad guy is waiting to jump out and kill the young stupid coed? Remember how you always said you would never do that? Practice that mentality.

TWO IMPORTANT RULES
RULE 1
LIVE LIFE.
RULE 2
KEEP DOING RULE 1.

Have something to live for. If society has collapsed and you're barely surviving, what's to stop you from giving up? You need to have a purpose greater than yourself. It could be your family and friends, but that's not enough. If you lost them, why would you keep going? Maybe it's because they would want you to. Maybe it's because you want to live long enough to help rebuild your country. Maybe it's because God must have a purpose for you. Whatever your reasons, they have to be bigger than yourself. If you haven't started thinking about those reasons, now is the time.



Value your life and the life of others around you. Self-preservation is ingrained in the human psyche. The protection and safety of yourself and your loved ones never takes the back seat to anyone else. In a SHTF situation you made need to make choices that are not always fair. No one can save everyone, but we can choose to help *if* and *when* we can. There are times when we may have to put the needs and safety of our loved ones above anyone else. These are hard choices to make, but we need to be prepared to make the hard choices when the time comes. Value living and others lives always. But be concerned about you and your loved ones survival first.

Be grateful for all you have right now.

See the beauty: Survivors are attuned to the wonder of the world.

Don't ever, ever quit or give up

Every crisis has an opportunity to achieve something good and or great.



General wellness also includes staying on top of medical issues. Do not put off dealing with check-ups and procedures because your quality/length of life might be altered, not to mention your survivability. Some issues, such as Type II diabetes, might be controlled through diet and exercise and this might be helpful if there is a shortage of insulin or medical treatment. Do not forget about your teeth either because hygiene will likely suffer with limited supplies of water and dental care products. Dental issues can range from horribly uncomfortable to fatal if neglected.

Realize how the body and mind react to stress, and how those reactions figure in our daily lives and interactions with family, friends, and colleagues.

Don't wait for a doctor to tell you to eat better and or exercise more, just do it!

Don't let stress rule you. Identify it and change your perception of it.

Physical fitness cannot be stressed enough for survival because a grid-down, chaotic world will involve a level of physical exertion that our culture is no longer accustomed to doing. Simply put, when the SHTF, life will become more physical. Manual labor, cardiovascular-based transportation, moving heavy weights, and even engaging in physical confrontations will be daily life. Do you remember doing an activity as a child that was so easy, but now leaves you sore the next day, like raking leaves? That is because we do not perform such work anymore, but a survival world is much different so start getting fit now. You will not wait until doomsday is here to get supplies or training and I seriously doubt you will get four months to prepare your body when the SHTF.

Take a walk everyday and use the stairs instead of an elevator every other time. If you are mobility challenged or have some kind of cardiac or breathing ailment, get a book on calisthenics to get your seldom used muscles in shape.

The key to living healthy is balance. Being healthy is a lifestyle that will not only improve your daily life and longevity, but will also increase your ability to survive. First, a proper and nutritious diet is a must. Your body needs healthy meals to ensure you have fuel to function, work, and exercise and to keep your body at a healthy weight. You do not need to carry unnecessary weight in a survival situation but remember balance; no fad, starvation diets or unhealthy supplements that dehydrate you. Eat the recommended amount of calories from good sources and ensure you are exercising.

Your mind will tell you that you are exhausted long before your body actually is. One way to address this is to train for time instead of repetition or distance in regard to calisthenics or running. It is often more beneficial to do one minute of push ups (resting when needed in the up position) rather than say thirty. I am not saying numbered repetitions or set distances do not have their place, but five sets of twenty-five push ups is probably less effective than five one minute sessions, even if you rest. Another effective way to improve fitness and mental toughness is through body weight muscle failure exercises and this means exactly what it says; perform the exercise until you physically cannot, not just until you are tired and want to stop. Naturally, this must be done with care to avoid overtraining and injury. The discipline it takes to maintain a fit body will lead to a healthy mind and the survivor's mindset can be the difference between life and death.

Manage Stress: Any survival situation will be stressful. One must learn to manage stress now to not only improve overall health, but to increase your chances of survival. Diet and exercise typically fight stress, but have you ever seen a person who has a highly stressful life and cannot shed belly fat despite an intense fitness plan and sensible diet? That is

likely attributed to stress and its by-product cortisol. Stress causes stored fat and clogged arteries in otherwise healthy people so take time to manage it.

A tool to prepare you mentally against stress when the SHTF is rehearsal and repetition, muscle memory as many people call it. When you are in danger or in some other high-stress environment, your body enters fight or flight mode. When this occurs, you will find that your pupils dilate, you cannot grab things as easily, breathing increases, and a host of other things. This is why you must practice so that when it is real, the training takes over. You do not want to hesitate when it counts! Applying a tourniquet in a climate controlled classroom on your friend who is laughing at your mistakes is different then when you are in tired, hungry, and in hostile/harsh conditions when someone's life is in the balance.



Don't stop learning. You are never too old to learn something new.

Don't think that practicing something a few times is enough. Practice makes perfect and repetition is the foundation to learning.

*“Any person who has never made a mistake
has never tried anything new.”*

Albert Einstein

Acquire New Skills: What do you need to learn or have in order to be the least burden and most helpful to yourself, your family and society under abnormal circumstances. Put some thought into water, shelter, medical, communication, food and protection.

Knowledge that is supported by the proper skills and practical experience can save your life. This is an essential aspect of any survival situation. The fear and confusion that arises during a time of crisis often leaves people wondering what to do next. As a result of this type of thinking, there are many who do absolutely nothing and allow their fear and confusion to cloud their thought processes. In a survival situation, your thinking needs to be clear and directed at your immediate problems in order to get you moving in the right direction. Your survival may depend on your knowledge.

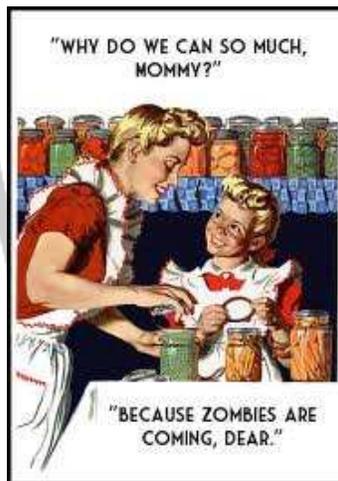
There is a simple truth in the statement that knowledge is power. Knowledge can give you the power to overcome disasters, both small and large, that can affect your daily life. While knowledge is a key ingredient, it is only a part of the recipe for survival. Knowledge requires additional ingredients to support it in order to achieve a successful outcome.

Skills that involve the practical application of your knowledge will provide the necessary backup to insure the implementation of your knowledge in the most practical and efficient manner possible. This will give you the edge that may mean the difference in your survival.

Don't discount the value of your experience. Experience is a hard teacher and teaches us what will work and what doesn't. These are often lessons that are learned the hard way. Experience is simply the knowledge of our previous actions. It is often a harsh reminder of how we have failed to properly apply our knowledge in a wide variety of circumstances.

Knowledge alone won't save you. It needs the support of a good set of skills and a decent amount of experience to help you survive what comes your way.

Knowledge + Skills + Experience = A Recipe for Survival



Never underestimate the need for defense, safety and security. Security is essential. You must be prepared to protect yourself, your family, and your supplies. If you do not protect them, you are basically giving up your life and the lives of those in your care. In a matter of seconds, your life and your children's lives can be irrevocably lost.

Feeling safe and protected is a common goal we all seek. When this feeling of being safe and protected is achieved, we can then begin to thrive and not merely survive. It is the fulfillment of these needs and desires that quite often contributes the most to our feelings of being alive. A proper survival mindset, when combined with your skills and abilities, will allow you to achieve this basic need to feel safe and protected.

All the basics items necessary for our survival contribute to our feelings of being safe and protected. Shelter can protect us from the elements of nature and fire can give us both light and warmth. Food and water can protect us from hunger and thirst. The survival mindset will kick in when these qualities are absent. Your instincts will cause you to seek out the necessary environment that will allow you to restore your feelings of being safe and protected. Your abilities will allow you to achieve them.



Don't let yourself be a victim. You may not wish to own firearms, however you still need a plan of defense from those who do and may become a threat in a SHTF world.

A security protocol for your family is only as strong as its weakest link. If you are an IDPA shooting world champion but you can't get your daughter to lock the door even to save her life, that's as well prepared as you are.

You can purchase guns and ammo from most sporting good stores, and take gun safety courses from most police stations, gun ranges, and the National Rifle Association. Sometimes there are private courses available in your community or learn several styles of self defense fighting through video courses and in local schools if they are available in your community. Acquire the tools and knowledge to protect and defend you and yours. Whatever you choose be sure you learn how to use it and maintain it.



Even if you choose to arm yourself with Wasp or Pepper Spray, instead of a firearm, it pays to take a basic firearm course so you can safely handle the firearms you capture and disable from any intruder. Do research on non-firearm and or other non-lethal forms of general defense, security, safety and self-defense. Implement the best for your needs.

Think perimeter hazards, alarms, booby traps and the like. Reinforce an inner room in your home that withstands the assault of any natural or human intruder/attack.

There is nothing wrong with concealed carry- Get passed everything you have ever heard about carrying a loaded weapon. There is nothing wrong with it, as long as you follow your states laws. Get a gun, learn how to use it, get your concealed carry permit. If you have to use it, at least you will be alive to see your family. While you are at it, take a tactical course, if you can find one in your area. Learn to use your weapon under stressful situations because you will never be in a situation where you will be shooting at someone that isn't stressful. It's better to understand how our society and the system that runs it works. Make it work for you as much as possible and protect yourself and your family from its negative aspects.



Avoid Conflicting guidance traps. This means you have to take all the information, process it and make an informed decision that works best for you and your family. Evaluate and think for yourself.

- Learn what to expect, then it won't be unexpected.
- Develop a strong positive attitude and mental toughness.
- Seek out knowledge and develop your survival skills.

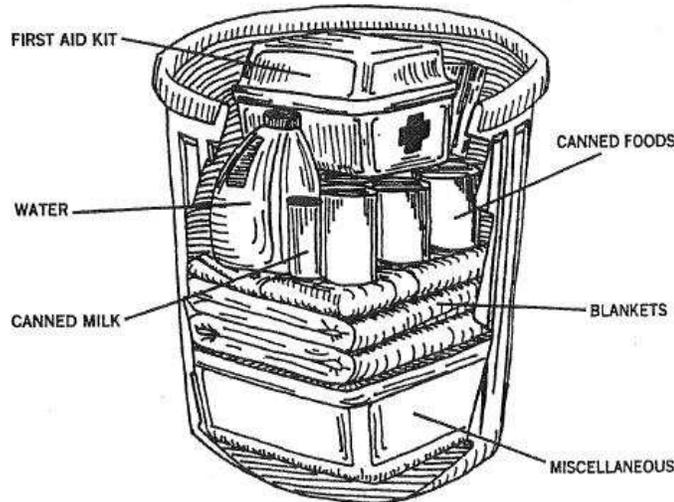
Actively seeing and assessing information is crucial when it comes time to actually put a plan into action. Being aware of your situation is a must. And remember, you **MUST** have a plan. Be aware of your surroundings. Notice the sun's position at different parts of the day. Notice the cars/trucks you see on a regular basis in and around you no matter where you are.

Visualize the mile-markers along the way to the ultimate preparedness goal.

Spend most of your money and time on dual purpose items, especially those which get you doing things with people, not expensive items you may never take out of the package. Carrying a lot of debt hampers our ability to prepare. Money that goes into paying high interest rates can be better used to buy supplies or save for emergencies. Are we spending our hard earned money on stuff we don't really need? As you go through your day, be aware of all the products you reach for. Some of these items, you will want to stock up on, if you'd rather not do without. Toothpaste for example. I have tried the baking soda route, and it works but it makes me want to throw up. So I have decided, I will stock up on toothpaste. But I can live without mouthwash, as salt and water will do the same job. From a prepping perspective, the less products you depend upon, the better off you will be. You will save money, possibly stay healthier without all the chemicals you are adding to your skin, hair, clothing and air. And if SHTF, you won't freak out and miss them so much. You'll miss the big things like food, clean water, shelter, etc.. but that's why we prepare: we want to avoid missing those big things.

Storage of Emergency Supplies

Some families prefer to store their emergency supplies in one location. Choose a place in your home which would be relatively safe in time of an earthquake (such as a closet or under a bed). The perishable supplies will remain stable longer if stored in a cool, dark location.



One suggested method for storing emergency supplies is to place them in a large, covered trash container. They can be layered as shown and all kept together in the large covered container.

*** Note:** It is best to store plastic water containers on top of the contents rather than on the bottom where they could possibly crack and leak from the weight of heavy objects placed on top of them.

Focus on **keeping survival gear to a minimum** – what are your priorities, what is the least you can get by on? If you already have two emergency radios, you probably can do without buying a third.



Find like-minded people. Having like-minded people surrounding you can be encouraging, uplifting, and provide excellent resources in your efforts to meet the challenges ahead. Meet with other like-minded people to share responsibilities and resources. This is most especially important in close neighborhoods. If you can find others that are close to you, emotionally, spiritually and physically that share your goals and ideas, count it as a blessing. Work together. Perhaps they have medical skills, while you have construction skills. Perhaps they love gardening, and you love canning food. Without moving out onto the commune, you can start a community and build a foundation of strength for when the world is shaking.

If you cannot find others nearby, do not fret. Information is *widely available*. I have even included many valuable links below. And *never* underestimate your ability to learn new skills and rise to the challenge. It does take work. But it is worth it.



Survivors Band Together And Tend To Reward Each Other

Hang out with a core group of survivors and you'll build a solid support structure that will not only help you cope with life, but also can help you start building more favorable circumstances. Fellow survivors who are farther along the process than you are tend to look back at people who are walking the path, as they did, and will open doors for them. Because they identify with your struggle, they feel a desire to help.



Survivors build networks of people they respect, and focus on providing value to those people – whether it's a tangible value, such as doing something to help those people, or an intangible act such as simply looking up to them and being a friend. Those networks can open up opportunities for you that serve both parties – you, because you have had your circumstances shifted to more favorable ones, and for the other person, who can enjoy the satisfaction of helping someone whose need they can relate to (which is often a coping mechanism in itself).

For additional tips see: *Tips on Selecting Members for a Successful Preparedness Survival Group - Getting Along Today & Tomorrow* @ <http://FormerlyNMUrbanHomesteader.weebly.com>



Even though we know that keeping our mouth shut about certain things is important, we should **be a person involved in the community**, trying to make a difference and help others.

There is no reason to tell exactly what you have stored, or even go too far into personal beliefs, but you can still help people around you, your neighbors, share information and organize if there's the will to do so in the community.

Make friends with those who work or shop at places that give you knowledge and help When you find an excellent source of products for your home, your garden, or anything else, chances are the people who shop or work there are just as valuable as the items purchased, often even more so. We have learned from others' mistakes without having to make them. When in doubt, ask. Better to look stupid now, than stupid later.

Rather than running away from the world, society, or the system, whatever you want to call it, its better **to understand how our society and the system that runs it works**. Make it work for you as much as possible and protect yourself and your family from its negative aspects.



Join a community garden –Find a local group of your own – there are opportunities everywhere and knowledge to exchange.

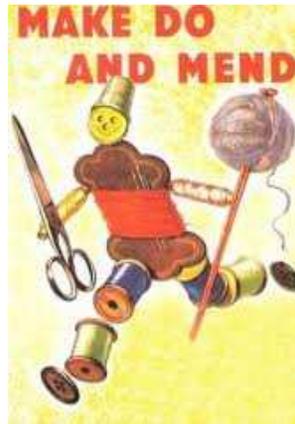


Get to know your neighbors – That crazy guy down the street? The charming lady across the way? They may be the ones who help you most if the fertilizer hits the fan. Also, a group of watchful neighbors are less likely to fall victim to mob mentality, and it is far better to know who is right next door in a catastrophe.



Establish trust: We are all part of a larger community. If you are with family members who know and love each other, trust is not a problem. But what if you don't know or don't get along with, your neighbors? It's going to be iffy

whether in an emergency, you will work with them, or even know what each of you is capable of doing (and what each of you urgently needs) so that you can work together effectively.



Don't chuck it, fix it! Mend clothing and repair tools and equipment or re-purpose it into something new and useful.

Find new uses for common items – One man's junk is another man's treasure. For example, make a sterno burner using tuna cans, cardboard and old candle wax. Or transform aluminum pop cans into solar heating devices.

Delaying gratification more than taking it and avoiding instant wants from your long term needs.

Cut back on all 'vices' and empty calories that inhibit physical fitness.



Choose Role Models Who Can Teach You To Cope And Thrive. Don't ditch your friends. Just become more aware of how they are affecting you (both positively and negatively). The more you associate with people who choose to deal with adversity in a positive way, the more those role models will help you do the same.

Look at your yard with new eyes – Does your back yard have a bumper crop of dandelions? Why curse something that has the ability to relieve liver disorders, aid the pancreas, maintain bone health, and cure acne? What an awesome plant! Not a weed. Not anymore. And if you don't fancy the taste, then feed them to your chickens and you will have happy feathered friends and healthy eating eggs. Try 'edible landscaping' which isn't just nice to look at, these plants often smell good too, as well as being used in food or natural medicine too.



Review Your Life: Be sure you are comfortable with your level of insurance, that you have invested in your job skills to the best of your ability, are heeding preventative measures for any natural crises and that you are taking good medical and dental care of yourself. Start with “normal” things like fire alarms, locks, being current on your vaccinations and having a family communications plan.

*“Creator grant me the Serenity to accept the things I cannot change ...
Courage to change the things I can ...
and Wisdom to know the difference ...”*

Review Utilities & Service Options: Always consider your options when services like cell phone, water, electricity, natural gas or customary transportation are not available. Only after thinking about what needs to be done in all events should you put effort into specific events and then focus on those which are most probable in your area.

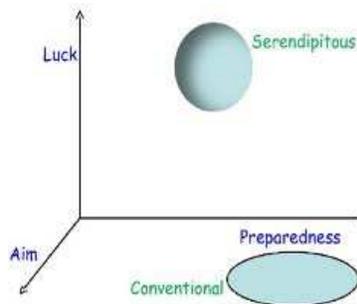


Taking it one step
at a time.

More factors suggested by the Pro's:

As a society we have become so dependent on technology to keep us safe that we no longer think about the threats to our safety and what we would do in the event that our lives are placed at risk. *We have come to depend on others to keep us free from harm.* The Federal government, state governments, our employers, family members and others indeed, have a role in keeping us all safe, but ultimately we each have to recognize that *no one is more responsible for our safety than we are.*

This “buck” cannot be passed! Our safety is dependent on the preparation we accomplish *before* an event. Our safety is dependent on our ability to recognize danger and react quickly enough to ensure our safety.



A comprehensive analysis of the threats to your safety must be followed by an honest, objective appraisal of your knowledge and skill levels and ability to cope with those threats (our mental health).

Experience can help you through a tough situation or it can betray you by setting you up to fail when your experience doesn't take into account a new situation. Put another way: *"People are often setup for a disaster, not by their inexperience, but by their experience."*

While the tangible risks can usually be managed, the subjective, intangible issues, the human factors, are much more difficult to come to grips with. To be a survivor you must prepare for what you hope will never happen while accepting the possibility that a crisis can happen at any time.



There is no magic pill we can take to have the right mindset!

At some point you need to ask yourself *"What do I want my newspaper headline to say?"* "Survived in Style" or "Deceased?"

Positive Mental Attitude

Situational awareness, basic knowledge and a "survivor's mindset" enable you to cope effectively

- **STOP**
 - Calm down, and size up your situation...
- **THINK**
 - Anticipate which hazards are most likely
 - Take stock of materials and resources around you
- **OBSERVE**
 - Orient yourself to your surroundings
- **PLAN**
 - Select equipment and supplies appropriately
- **ACT!**
 - Execute the plan, evaluate progress, adjust, go on.

Part of developing a survival mindset is being aware of your situation. The military developed a set of color codes which Col. Jeff Cooper (a respected firearms trainer) adapted for personal "street" survival by those who carry a firearm. Others have taken this military color code to refer to one's Situational Awareness. It goes something like this:

Condition White An individual in Condition White is totally unaware that the world is an unpredictable (at best) place and that they could be put in danger by a man-made

Condition Yellow An individual in Condition Yellow has accepted responsibility for his or her personal survival. They have admitted that the veneer of civilization can be

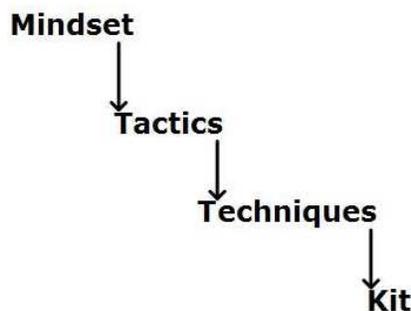
<p>or natural disaster with little or no warning. They suffer from the misguided belief that the government will protect them and keep them safe.</p>	<p>wiped away, catapulting us back to an era where our modern conveniences don't work. They realize that the police cannot protect them before a crime has been committed. They realize that while mankind can harness some of nature's powers, and predict some of her behavior, it cannot stand against her fury.</p> <p>This individual has started making preparations to protect themselves and their loved ones from potential disasters. They monitor the news for weather-related danger or potential civil unrest. By reading this far into Captain Dave's Survival Guide, you are probably in condition Yellow.</p>
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<p>Condition Orange You are in Condition Orange when you realize a dangerous event is on the horizon and looming closer. It could be a hurricane heading towards you, an impending snow storm or a gang of youths crossing the street on a course ready to intercept you. In condition Orange, you are preparing to survive an impending situation. This could mean filling improvised water tanks or bringing extra fire wood into the house to dry. It could be loading the car in preparation to evacuate or hanging hurricane shutters.</p>	<p>Condition Red You are in a survival situation and the dangerous event is there NOW. This means the bullets are flying, or the water is rising or the wind is howling, the electricity is out and the snow is piling up. You're most important priority is to ride out the moment, to survive the immediate event, like taking shelter or running or, depending on the situation, fighting back.</p>
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(Note, in some emergencies -- like an earthquake or terrorist bombing -- you may go straight from Condition Yellow to Condition Red or Black.)

Condition Black The Preppers version of the color code, Condition Black is after the catastrophic event, but before the situation has returned to normalcy. You still are depending on your survival stash and skills to survive, but the danger is longer term, not immediate.

Examples of condition black could be the earthquake that is over, but you can't return to your home. Or the river has crested, but it will be days before you can return home and longer before you are cleaned out. Or the riots have died down, but you dare not leave your house or neighborhood. Or the snow has stopped but the electricity has not been restored, and it will be a few days before the plows dig you out.



Think about your worst-case scenario and determine how long you might have to survive in condition black. Remember that in a catastrophic event, such as nuclear war, a terrible plague, a comet strike or an alien invasion "normalcy" may only be in your memory.

There is another color code for Situational Awareness:



For more information on Situational Awareness see: Situational Awareness and You @ <http://www.scribd.com/doc/61546986/Situational-Awareness-and-You>

- S** Size up the situation (surroundings, physical condition, equipment)
- U** Use all your senses; undue haste makes waste
- R** Remember where you are
- V** Vanquish fear and panic
- I** Improvise (MacGyverise)
- V** Value living
- A** Act like the natives
- L** Live by your wits, but for now, learn basic survival skills

A word about Shelf Life:

Always remember that just about everything has some kind of shelf life – even tires. **Where food is concerned 'shelf life' most often refers to the nutritional value of the item** before considering contamination that can make you sick.



Different foods, containers, storage areas and preservation methods will result in different shelf lives. Therefore it is an absolute necessity to rotate your food stores and crisis supplies to ensure that they remain nutritional and viable for use.

For more shelf life information see: *Shelf Life Information on Lots of Things* - Must download in excel format to see all tabs @ http://weebly-file/2/2/5/0/22509786/shelf_life_information_on_lots_of_things_wrd_97_new.xls

TNT

Take Responsibility
Make a Plan
Have a Kit
Practice
Stay Aware